



News Release

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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Water Supply Committee: Adequate Supply Of Water Expected This Year

Members of the Idaho Water Supply Committee gathered Thursday in Boise to share and review the latest weather and water data. The committee said that most areas should have an adequate supply of water for irrigation and recreation this year.

The highest snowpacks can be found in the Idaho Panhandle Region, which is 91 percent of normal snow water equivalent. The Big Lost Basin and Little Wood Basin in the Carey and Arco areas and the Owyhee Basin in the extreme southwest corner of the state have the lowest snowpacks with 66 to 68 percent of normal. Most river basins in the state are from 73 to 83 percent of normal.

“As of today we have about half the snowpack we had at this time last year,” National Weather Service hydrologist Jay Breidenbach said. Even though snowpacks are below normal in Central and Southern Idaho, reservoir carry over storage from last years good water year will help mitigate the negative impact of reduced stream flows.

The threat of spring flooding should be below normal in most areas if current trends continue. The only exception is in the Idaho Panhandle where snowpacks are much closer to normal and there has been some minor flooding already this season along the Coeur d’Alene River.

Ron Abramovich with the NRCS Snow Survey Program mentioned that the unusually warm temperatures we’ve been experiencing over the last couple of weeks with overnight lows remaining above freezing in some of the low and mid elevation mountain locations have caused the snowpack to melt through the overnight hours. This has caused a much faster melting of that snowpack than what would be seen under normal conditions. But he also mentioned that cooler temperatures expected this week should reduce the melting in those locations.

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The Water Supply Committee is made up of hydrologists, meteorologists, and water experts both from the private and public sector. The Committee is scheduled to hold its next meeting on April 12, 2007 at 10 a.m. at the Idaho Water Center in Boise.

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